

CaixaBank accompanies Sail Team BCN in the presentation of the first women's America's Cup crew in history

- **Port de Sitges welcomes the official announcement of Támara Echegoyen, Silvia Mas, Paula Barceló, María Cantero and Neus Ballester as the first crew members of the Spanish team**

Sitges, 20th March.

Port de Sitges today hosted the presentation of the Sail Team BCN crew that is going to make history by participating in the first women's America's Cup in history. Támara Echegoyen, Silvia Mas, Paula Barceló, María Cantero and Neus Ballester are the first Spanish sailors who will have the responsibility and privilege of defending the colors of the Spanish team in the waters of Barcelona.

The Puig Women's America's Cup will be held between September 28 and October 13 and marks the first time in the 173-year history of the America's Cup, which is the oldest tournament in the world of sport, in which there will be a women's competition in addition to the official competition and the youth competition.

Albert Bertran, executive president of Port de Sitges, valued the enormous harmony that exists between Sail Team BCN and its home and official training base. "Sitges has always been a pioneer in many things. We had the first oval racetrack, the first golf club on the Peninsula or even the first Pachá nightclub, which was born in Sitges. Barcelona is going to deserve the glory and will be the first city to host the Olympic Games, the World Cup and the Copa América. But Sitges also because it is the official base of Sail Team BCN. At Port de Sitges we will always welcome you with open arms. "It's your house," he told the sailors.

Guillermo Altadill, Team Principal of Sail Team BCN, explained how Sail Team BCN came about. "At first there was talk of having an absolute team, but it was dangerous because Spain cannot make a fool of itself. Therefore, a women's and youth team was formed and the objective is that this does not end here, that for the next editions, which will have a women's edition, it is maintained. This should be a starting point. Our idea was to stay in Sitges for a short time before going to Barcelona, but now we have to stay here and not leave. We feel at home and we will go to Barcelona just to compete," commented Altadill, who sent a message of encouragement to his sailors. "They are the real protagonists. "You are starting a new page in the Copa América and apart from the quality as sailors, you have the privilege of being in one of the most important sporting competitions in the world."

After the words of the leaders, it was the turn of the sailors who are going to make history. The first was Silvia Mas (Barcelona, August 23, 1996), who has an excellent record despite her youth. Born in a family that breathes sail from all sides, she has been a world champion and participated in the Tokyo Olympic Games. “Obviously as competitors that we are, we all like to win. But you have to keep a cool head, it is the first time in history and there are other teams that have a little more advantage because they already have AC40. Although we have a simulator and a team that works to try to get hours on the boat. We are going to try to fight to do it as best as possible. The most important thing is that this serves for the future, breaking barriers and everything upwards from here.”

Paula Barceló (Palma de Mallorca, March 13, 1996) is also a world champion along with Támara Echegoyen in 49erFX, and both are going to represent Spain in the Olympic Games this summer before focusing on the Copa América. “When the Copa América thing came out we knew it was a nice opportunity for us. We feel very lucky to be part of this and although this is a different project from Olympic sailing, we do the same thing: sailing. They both contribute. We have the desire to face them, enthusiasm and energy.”

María Cantero (Gran Canaria, June 26, 1997) has been going strong, since she has achieved junior world bronze and has participated in the Spanish SailGP team. “It is an incredible opportunity to develop ourselves as sailors. It is an example of the advancement of women in the world of sailing and we hope that it serves as an inspiration for new generations.”

Neus Ballester (Palma de Mallorca, December 16, 2003) is the youngest of the team and has sailing in her blood, since her father, Pepote Ballester, is an Olympic champion and her mother, Neus Bover, a world champion. Despite her youth, she already has two 420 world titles in her cabinet. “I am very proud to be here. My parents don’t put much pressure on me either because they want me to do what I like the most.”

Finally, Tamara Echegoyen (Orense, February 17, 1984) is one of the great references of the Spanish team. Considered one of the best Spanish sailors in history, she has been an Olympic, world and European champion, in addition to being the only Spaniard to have done The Ocean Race, a team round-the-world race. Támara couldn’t arrive at the event on time due to logistical problems, but she was delighted with the project. “I am and delighted to be part of this team with such talented colleagues. We are excited to make the most of this opportunity, especially at home. We look forward to seeing you all in October.”

The Sail Teal BCN will also present the crew members selected for the Youth team in mid-April.

Sail Team BCN has Foundation 0 and Caixabank as main sponsors and Port de Sitges, Highfield, Musto, BWA Yachting, Sailproof and Team Out as suppliers.